THE LAST

SPEECH

AND

TESTIMONY

OF

Mr. Chriſtopher Love,

Miniſter at LAURENCE-JURY, LONDON.

Delivered to the PEOPLE from the SCAFFOLD on *Tower-hill*, immediately before his Execution, *Auguſt* 22*d*, 1651,

Being in the Time of *Oliver Cromwel's* USURPATION.

Unde tam dirus furor in Prophetas!

Buchan.

JOHN V. 35. *He was a burning and ſhining Light.*

HEB. XI. 4. *And by it he being dead, yet ſpeaketh.*

PSAL. CXVI. 15. *Precious in the Sight of the Lord, is the Death of his Saints.*

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The last SPEECH and TESTIMONY of Mr. CHRISTOPHER LOVE, Minister at Laurence-Jury, London: Delivered to the People from the Scaffold on Tower-hill, August 22, 1651.

BELOVED CHRISTIANS,

I Am made this Day a Spectacle to the World, to Angels and Men; a Grief to the Godly, a Laughing-stock to the Wicked, a Gazing-stock to all: Yet, blessed be my GOD, not a Terror to my self. Altho' there be but little between me and Death, yet that which bears up my Heart, is, that there is little between me and Heaven. It comforted Dr. *Taylour*, that famous Martyr, going to his Execution, to think there were but two Stiles between him and his Father's House. There is but a little Way to my Father's Kingdom, there are but two Steps between me and Glory. It is but to ly down on the Block and die, and then I shall presently ascend to a Throne. I am this Day sailing towards the Ocean of Eternity, tho' through a roughsome Passage, yet to a Haven of Rest: Through a red Sea to the promised Land. Methinks I hear GOD speak to me, as He did to *Moses, Go up to Mount Nebo, and die there*: So to me, Go up to *TOWER-HILL* and die there. *Isaac* said of himself, *That he was old, and knew not the Day of his Death*; but I cannot say thus; I am young, yet know the Day, Kind and Place of my Death; Such a Kind of Death, that two famous Preachers of GOD's Word suffered before me; *John the Baptist*, and *Paul* the Apostle, both beheaded for the Testimony of JESUS; the one recorded in Scripture, the other in Ecclesiastick History; and, *Rev.* 20. 4. *The Saints were beheaded for the Word of GOD, and for the Testimony of JESUS.* But here is my Disadvantage, Men think I suffer not for RELIGION or CONSCIENCE, but for MEDDLING IN STATE-MATTERS. An old Trick of the Devil, to impute the Cause of GOD's Peoples Sufferings, to Intermeddling with State-matters. The *Jewish* Rulers would put *Jeremiah* to Death upon a civil Account, tho' it was the Truth of his Prophesie that made them angry; because (as they alledged) he brought in forreign Forces to invade them, and did fall away to the *Chaldeans*. Tho' the like be laid to my Charge, I am as Innocent as *Jeremiah* was. I find the Cause of Mens Sufferings in Scripture, imputed to Meddling in State-matters. *Paul* must die, if the People get their Will; tho' he preached JESUS, yet by them

them he was reck'ned a Mover of Sedition. The same Thing is laid to my Charge, whereas indeed it is because I pursue my Covenant, and will not prostitute my Principles to the Lusts of Men. On a civil Account is my Life taken away, yet I prosecuted nothing against the present Powers. Beloved, I am this Day making a double Exchange, of a Pulpit for a Scaffold, and of a Scaffold for a Throne; of a great Multitude on *Tower-hill*, for an innumerable Company of Saints on the *Holy Hill of Zion*; of a Guard of Soldiers, for a Guard of Angels, to guard my Soul to *Abraham*'s Bosom. This Scaffold is the best Pulpit I ever preached in; in the former, GOD, through his Grace, made me an Instrument to bring others to Heaven, but by this, GOD brings me to Heaven. Perhaps this last Speech of mine, may bring more Glory to GOD, than my former Sermons did.

Before I lay my Neck on the Block, I shall lay open my Case before the People, and that without Animosity and Revenge, *I speak the Truth, I lie not, GOD is my Witness, whom I serve with my Spirit*, that I bring not a revengeful Heart to the Scaffold: Before I came here, upon my bended Knees, I begged Mercy for them, who denyed Mercy to me, and that GOD would forgive them, who would not forgive me, or rather give me Justice and Equity. I have forgiven from my Heart the worst Enemy I have in all the World; and this is the worst that I wish to my Accusers and Prosecuters, who have pursued my Blood, that I might meet their Souls in Heaven. Concerning my CHARGE, which is black and hideous, wherein many Things are falsly suggested, but nothing sufficiently proven: The Charge is high and full, but the Proof is empty and low. Altho' there were Eight Witnesses adduced against me, yet none of them proved that I did write, or directed to write, or that I sent Letters to, or collected any Money for KING or QUEEN, or *SCOTTISH Army*. I have forgiven my Accusers, and do pray GOD to forgive them, who did not all agree among themselves. Some of them were terrify'd, and would not bear Witness against me. One sent to me, under his own Hand, desiring me to forgive him the Wrong he had done me, and said, That if I should die a violent Death, his Life would be no Comfort to him, he being an Instrument of Taking away my Life. I will neither condemn nor justify my Accusers, that which moved *Herod* to cut off *John Baptist*'s Head, is the Cause of my Death. He told *Herod* of his Incest, and for his Oaths sake, a Command was given to behead *John the Baptist*. *Herod*, to hide Filthiness, did commit Murther: Had *Herod* obeyed Counsel, then had *John Baptist*'s Head continued on his Shoulders, and *Herod* would have been guilty of neither. Many various Reports have passed anent me. Some have been ready to bury my Name, before my Friends were ready to bury my Body; but the LORD will not only wipe off all my Tears, after my Death, from mine Eyes, but also he will one Day wipe off all Blots from my good Name. I hope my Name shall not rot above Ground, altho' my Body shall rot under Ground, and be dissolved to Dust. I am not Ignorant what Calumnies were cast upon me;

This very last Night before I was to suffer, an insulting Letter came to my Hand, intimating that something would be written against me after my Death. I hope ye think me now ingenuous, and that ye will not give Credit to any such Writing, seing after Death, I cannot speak for my self. I am made a Derision and Sport, both as to Practice and Principles. Sad Aspersions are laid upon me, as that I am a frequent Lier. I hope ye will now believe a dying Man, who dare not look the GOD of Truth in the Face, with a Lie in his Mouth. And now I say, that I denyed nothing that was true, when I was asked by the Court. What I said at the Bar, neither GOD nor my own Conscience condemns me for it. I am next condemned of Extortion, receiving 30 *lib.* for the Loan of 300, which I say, in the Presence of GOD and you all, is a notorious Fable. I am likewise accused to be an Adulterer; but as *Luther* said, he was never Tempted to Covetousness, so may I say, through the LORD's Grace, I was never tempted to Uncleanness. But it grieves me not much, that such Slanders ly upon me, seing two Harlots were suborned to accuse *Athanasius*, that he had committed Folly with them, tho' he was very Modest and Chast. But that which comes neareſt my Heart, is, That I am accused to be a Murtherer, and charged with all the Blood-shed in *SCOTLAND*. Were I guilty of one drop of it, I would not be filled with so much Tranquility and Peace of Mind, and with so much Serenity and Joy of Spirit, as now I have. I bless GOD *I am free from the Blood of all Men*: But many Men deal with me, as *Nero* did with the Christians in his Time, who first set *Rome* on Fire, and then charged it on them: So is *Scotland* and *England* set in a Flame, and by the Ears, and now they lay the Charge of it on me; whereas it is only the Ambition and Lust of wicked Men, that have kindled that Flame. Did I ever incourage or invite our *English* Army to invade *SCOTLAND*. Indeed this I have done, and I stand to and avow it, That I prayed to the LORD, that there might be an Agreement betwixt the KING and the *SCOTS*. And I declare against the Commissioners, as they call them, that it was an Act of high Presumption, and a notorious Falshood in them to say, It was a Plot of the PRESBYTERIAN Party; it was rather the Subtilty of a politick Party, to raise this Calumny, to make the PRESBYTERIANS odious, who are the best ordered Persons in the World for a Government. I am also said to be a Man of a turbulent Spirit, and an Enemy to this Nations Peace. Indeed I am a Man of Contention, but not active, only passive: Many strive and contend with me; but I strive with no Man. The Grief of my Heart has been for Divisions, and my Souls Desire has been for Union amongst GOD's People. I do not mean STATE UNION, to engage against the present Powers, which is rather Confederacy and Combination, than Union: But these Men who have gotten Power by Policy, and used it with Cruelty, shall lose it with Ignominy. I remember holy *Greenhams* observation, giving his Judgment of State Government, that he feared much the Incoming of *Popery*. I fear Atheism, Blasphemy, and all Manner of Heresies are rushing in upon this Land.

Now

Now a Word as to my PRINCIPLES. I am accused to be an Apostate, or to be this or that, or any Thing but what I am: But a high *Court of Justice*, a *long Sword*, a *bloody Scaffold*, has not made me change my Principles. Yet I intend not to provoke any by what I say; but I die with my Judgment set against MALIGNANCY; and I do not think the contending godly Party in *Scotland* to be Malignants, for Defending their Land against Invaders, or rather against *Malignity*; not against limited or mixed Monarchy. I did indeed oppose the Forces of the late King in my Place and Calling; and were I to live longer, *I* should do so still: Yet I am not against the Office of a King. I was against Court Parasites, who would screw up Monarchy into Tyranny; as I am against these that would put down Monarchy and set up Anarchy. I was never for Putting the King to Death, nor did I ever endeavour to do what tended to destroy him, as it's said I should have said in a Sermon at *Uxbrige*, THAT ALL WOULD NOT BE WELL, TILL THE KING WERE LET BLOOD OF IN THE NECK VAIN; which, as many other Expressions, is full of Vanity and Folly. I die with my Judgment not satisfy'd to take the *Engagement* or *Tender*: GOD preserve these that refuse it. I would not be looked upon as OWNING THIS PRESENT GOVERNMENT, I die with my Judgment against it. It was in the Hazard of my Life, that I petitioned the present Powers, giving them the Titles that other Men give them. *Hushai* gave to *Absolom*, the Title of *MY LORD O KING*, tho' *David* was lawful King. *Calvin* did give to the *French* King, the Title of *REX CHRISTIANISSIMUS*, and we gave that Title of *DEFENDER OF THE FAITH* to *Henry* the VIIIth, yet had he no Right to the Title; because it was given him upon an ill Ground by the *Pope*, for Opposing the Doctrine of *Luther*; and yet afterward none did scruple to give him this Title of *DEFENDER*, *&c.* My Judgment is also against the Invasion of *Scotland* by our *English* Army, seing the *Scots* joined with us, and drew their Swords in our Quarrel; and now because they would not be a COMMONWEALTH, therefore they shall not be a People; and because they would not lay their Consciences waste, therefore their Lands must be laid waste. I die cleaving to all these OATHS, VOWS and PROTESTATIONS, and SOLEMN LEAGUE and COVENANT, that were imposed by the two Houses of Parliament; and so had rather die a Covenant-Keeper, than live a Covenant-Breaker.

Now a Word of Exhortation to this great City, and then I commit my Soul to GOD who gave it. I have often wished Affluence and Confluence of all Happiness to thee, O *LONDON*. GOD is Staining the Pride of thy Glory. Contempt of a Preaching Ministry, and Opposition against Reformation hath brought thee low. I tremble to think of what Ills are coming upon thee; for as Commodities have been spread from hence to all the Corners of the Land, so Heresies and Blasphemies, in all Parts of the Land, have had their Rise from hence. Let me beg of you to love godly and painful Ministers; if they be taken away,

you are like to have worse come in their Room. After *JUNIUS* was taken away, *ARMINIUS*, that pestilent Heretick came in his Room. *Anabaptists*, *Arminians*, nay *Jesuits* are now like to spread a pace. Submit to Church Government that would lay Restraint on your Lusts. If ye submit not to a *Golden Yoak*, GOD may lay an *Iron Yoak* on you. Take heed of Doctrines that come under the Notion of *New Lights*. When the Broachers thereof say they are NEW, it is to be questioned if they be TRUE, *Deut:* 32. 17. *They sacrificed to Devils, not to GOD, to NEW GODS, that came newly up.* What were their NEW GODS, but *old Devils*? Many of these Things that go under the Name of NEW LIGHTS, are but Darkness raised out of the Dung-hill of Error, that hath been before cast out by the Church, and buried with Reproach. Bewail the great Loss you have by taking away your Ministers already, ten at once, *burning and shining Lights*, bright Stars in their several Orbs. I am taken out of the World, tho' I am unworthy of the World: But as for my suffering Brethren; who are under Bonds and Banishment, *of whom the World is not worthy*, let them take heed of Engaging in a War with our *Scots* Friends; I opposed the Tyranny of a King, but never the Title. Each one take heed what ye do to, or speak of the godly Ministers of this City. If I were not dying, I would say nothing, (for *Multitude of Years teach Wisdom*) but be silent. I only beg this of Ministers here, that as they *have not been ashamed of my Chains*, so they may wax confident by my Bonds and Blood, *Acts* 4. 29. *Now LORD behold their Threatnings, and grant unto thy Servants, that with all Boldness they may speak thy Word.* Tho' I am but young, I will offer my young Experience to their graver Science. I have set my self against Sin and Apostacy; and purchasing Mens ill Will, I have procured Peace with GOD. I have lived in Peace, and I shall die in Peace. The Government of the Church shall stand. I also die in this Perswasion, That PRESBYTERIAN GOVERNMENT makes most for PURITY and UNITY in all the Churches of the Saints. Take heed of too general Admissions to the Supper of the LORD, and be not prodigal of CHRIST's Blood. There are many Clamours, as if all the City Ministers were engaged in this Design, for which I am condemned to die; but all the Ministers that were present at that Meeting, or had any Hand in that Business, are either in Prison, or already discovered upon my Death. I free all Ministers else, in which my Conscience tells me I have not sinned. I would gladly be at my Father's House. I pray GOD for my own Congregation; and I give them thanks, who (except a few) have afforded me a great deal of Love and liberal Maintenance. All I desire of them, is to chuse a Godly, Learned, and Orthodox Minister to succeed me. It would be a great Comfort to me, if I were sure that such an one should fill the Place; who indeed would have a good Livelyhood, and much Love; I would never have parted with them, if Death had not separated me, to which I submit humbly, and with all Christian Meekness.

I am now coming to the End of my Speech and of my Life together; but before

before I expire my last Breath, I come to justify GOD and condemn my self; *He is Righteous, because I have sinned:* Tho' he cut me off in the midst of my Days, and of my Ministry, I cannot take up that Complaint. *Psal.* 44. 12. *Thou sellest thy People for nought.* My Blood shall not be sold for nought; I may do more good by my Death, and glorifie GOD more upon a Scaffold, than if I had dy'd on my Bed. Blessed be GOD, I have not the least Trouble in my Mind, but shall quietly lay down my Head upon the Block. I know, Men thirst for my Blood, which will lighten my Happiness, and hasten their Ruin. Tho' my Blood be not the Blood of Nobles, yet 'tis Christian Blood, Minister's Blood, yea more, 'tis also Innocent Blood. My dead Body will be a Morsel hard to be digested by this INFANT COMMON-WEALTH, and bad Food to eat. GOD is merciful that has not made the Prison Hell, and the Scaffold the bottomless Pit. I not only Justify GOD, but also magnify the Riches of his Mercy and Grace towards me, that I, who was born in *Wales*, an obscure Country, and of obscure Parents, should be singled out to honourable Suffering. For the first Fourteen Years of my Life, I never heard a Sermon preached; yet in the Fifteenth Year of my Life, it pleased GOD to convert me: Blessed be GOD, who not only made me a Christian, but also a Minister, *Judging me faithful, and putting me into the Ministry*, which is my Glory. I had rather be a Preacher in a Pulpit, than a Prince upon a Throne. I had rather be an Instrument to bring Souls to Heaven, than that all Nations should bring Tribute to me. Whatever Men judge of me, I am a MARTYR; for if I would have wronged my Conscience, and ventured my Soul, there had been more Hopes of my Life; but, blessed be GOD, I have not sinned in this Matter; but have chosen Affliction rather than Sin.

Welcome Death, welcome Ax, welcome Scaffold, welcome all, because ye send me to a Mansion in my Father's House. Thanks be to GOD, who stood by me in all my Imprisonments, and strengthned and supported me: Altho' now I am come to an untimely End, yet Death is not a Terror to me, GOD is not a Terror to me, and hence Death is not dreadful: Yea formerly I have been under a Spirit of Bondage, yea sometimes I have had more fear in Drawing out a Tooth, than now I have for Cutting off my Head. When Fear was upon me, Death was not near, but now when Death is near to me, my Fear is evanished. I bless GOD, that tho' Men count me as cast out of the World, yet GOD hath not cast me out of his Peoples Favour; tho' some think *I am not worthy to live*, yet others judge I deserve not to dy. I say no more, but desire the Help of your Prayers, that GOD would give continued and abundant Supplies of his Grace, for Carrying me through this great Work I have now to do, which I never did before; and so that I may have that Strength which I never had before, that in Dying I may put off this Body with as much Comfort of Mind, as ever I did put off my Cloaths to get Rest in Sleep.

Now I am to commend my Soul to GOD, and to receive my FATAL BLOW. I am comforted in this, tho' Men kill me, they cannot damn me; tho' Men thrust me out of the World, yet can they not shut me out of Heaven. I

am going to my long home, and ye to your d
Home, before ye be at yours. I am going to
numerable Company of Angels, to *the Spirits of just*
of all, in whose *Presence I shall have fulness of*
I conclude with that Speech of the Apostle, *I*
offered up, the Time of my Departure is at hand,
my Blood, I expect the full Declaration of Ren
of JESUS CHRIST, and so the LORD be w

Then desiring the Peoples Christian Assistance
pressed himself.

MOst Glorious and Eternal LORD, I, thy p
prostrate my self before thy Sacred Majesty,
CHRIST, my blessed Saviour and Redeemer, to
wouldst be pleased to strengthen me with thy Blessed
freely and willingly lay down my Neck on the Block
but also for my dear Brother, who is this Day to
have a triumphant and glorious Meeting, in th
LORD, glorifie me in Heaven, as I have glorifie
and so LORD JESUS into thy Hands I commend

Thus having laid his Head on the Block,
his Body, at one Blow.

Immediatly after, Mr. *Gibbons*, whom he ha
brought to the Scaffold, deporting himself wit
religious Magnanimity. After an indifferen
whereof was, that he was innocent of what he
withstanding, would not exchange his Conditi
laid his Neck to the Block, and having prayed
Body, at one Blow.

It will not be unfit here, to subjoin a short
haviour at his Death, as it is given by Dr. *Ca*
ter's Life, *Pag.* 66, *Vol.* 1. which is as follows

Mr. Love *was try'd, at a Court of Justice, whe*
ber of the Rump, *and Sollicitor for the* Common
to plead against the Life and Blood of the Innocent.
headed, dying neither Timerously nor Proudly, in any
Allacrity and fearless Quietness and freedom of Spee
been as little concern'd as the Standers by. A wor
beheaded with him for the same Cause. And at the
it on that Day, there was the dreadfullest Thund
heard or seen of a long Time before. This Blow su
Common wealth, *than will easily be believ'd at a*

mony of Mr. Christopher Love,

e to your short Home, but I shall be at my
m going to the *Heavenly Jerusalem*, to an
Spirits of just Men made perfect, and to *the Judge*
ve fulness of Joy, and Pleasures for ever more.
Apostle, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6,7,8. *I am now ready to be*
is at hand, I have fought, &c. When I have shed
ation of Remission of Sins through the Blood
ORD be with you.

an Assistance in Joining in Prayer, he thus ex-

D, I, thy poor and unworthy Creature, do here
red Majesty, beseeching thee, through the Merits of
edeemer, to have Mercy upon me; and that thou
by thy Blessed Spirit, in this great Work, that I may
on the Block: This I implore, not for my self only,
his Day to come after me, with whom I hope to
ting, in thy eternal Kingdom. Most Glorious
have glorified thee on Earth, or desired to do it;
I commend my Spirit.

he Block, the Executioner severed it from

whom he had made Mention of in Prayer, was
himself with a great deal of Resolution and
indifferent copious Speech, the Argument
of what he was brought thither for, yet not-
us Condition for an Emperor's Throne. He
ng prayed, his Head was severed from his

in a short Account of Mr. *Love's* Heroick be-
y Dr. *Calamy* in his Abrigement of Mr. *Bax-*
as follows,

Justice, where Edmund Prideaux *Esq; a Mem-*
Common-wealth, *tho't his Place allow'd him*
e Innocent. Mr. Love *was condemned and be-*
idly, in any desperate Bravado; but with as great
dom of Speech, as if he had but gone to Bed, and had
A worthy Gentleman, Mr. Gibbons, *was*
And at the Time of their Execution, or very near
est Thunder, Lightning and Tempest, that was
is Blow sunk deeper towards the Root of the New
ieu'd at a Distance.

N I S.

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